

LIFE OF

ARCHIBALD GARDNER

UTAH PIONEER OF 1847

THE LIFE OF ARCHIBALD GARDNER

Written by

DELLA GARDNER HUGHES

Copyright, October, 1939 by

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FIRST EDITION

Published by

The Archibald Gardner Family Genealogical Association

West Jordan, Utah

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

by

Alpine Publishing Co.

SECOND EDITION

Photolithographic Reproduction of first edition
with some format and typographical corrections and changes
and also newly compiled Index

Printed and Published by

Review and Preview Publishers

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by

Review and Preview Publishers

Box 368, Draper, Utah, 84020

"Now, you children, turn your hearts to your fathers. Learn their ways. Follow in their steps. Do as they did. Live as they lived. Have faith as they had faith. Follow in fine courage and true loyalty your leader as they followed their leader. Lest, as the prophet of old foretold, the Lord shall come and smite the earth with a curse." J. Reuben Clark.

The paramount purpose of this biography is to stir the inner consciousness of every descendant of our worthy ancestors to a thrilling appreciation of the sources from which we came, the noble clay of which we are moulded. If we, their posterity, do not measure up to the full stature of our possibilities, it is our fault, not that of the substance of which we are formed.

ANOTHER LETTER

In a letter from Mosa, dated April 16, 1851, Duncan Livingston gives news of the family in Canada and voices his interest in the West.

"Mother enjoys very good health. John and Neil are well. Dougal is a great deal better. He is at work pretty much every day. John McKellar's family is now enjoying good health. His wife was very ill but has recovered.

"You wanted us to sell out here and join you. We have a good place and no chance of disposing of our property to advantage. By the way, there is a railroad to pass within three miles of us which will increase the value of our holdings. It is called the Great Western and will run from Hamilton to Windsor and is supposed to be completed in two years. It was commenced last December.

"I should like you to let me know who it is that sells the land there, the cost per acre, and what chance to pay, or if the land is a free grant to settlers. Tell us more particularly about the country. Then if we are satisfied we will expect to pay you a visit, one and all of us.

"Tell us how you take care of your milk. What crops did you raise last summer, wheat, corn, rye, peas, buckwheat, oats, potatoes? And what was your average yield per acre? Was the season as dry as usual? How long will it take to water an acre of land? How do you do it? What sort of machine have you for the purpose? How often do you have to irrigate during the season? I suppose you have to leave vacant strips in time of sowing, to give the water a chance to reach the grain." (He hadn't any idea of how irrigating was done.)

"You will please write per receipt of this letter and let me know how long it takes to get to Utah, the best road to come on and the distance and difficulties to be encountered. How

ANOTHER LETTER

much do you think it would cost a family of eight or nine to make the trip? We have heard great talk of people dying for want of water, etc., crossing the sandy plains. Let us know if that be true.

"I have always heard it said that the handsomest feathers were on birds that were far away. Fact is, I believe you make the feathers rather too handsome but I expect you will be coming after your money which I believe is still laying in Port Sarma for you. If you do, you will certainly pay us a visit and we can discuss matters then more definitely.

"John McKellar started for California in November, 1849. We have heard nothing from him as yet. We did hear that he was at your place. So if you saw him or know anything about him you will let us know in your first letter.

"Mr. Branan has spent double the cost of your old grist mill in repairing it and the dam. Recently he put the mill in first class order, two run of stones. He can grind from fifteen to twenty bushel per hour. The dam he filled up with clay out of the bank opposite the mill. He has done nothing with the saw mill since you left. He is going to get it in shipshape this coming summer.

"All of your friends join me with kind compliments to one and all of you.

Your affectionate Brother,

Duncan Livingston."

John McKellar visited with the Gardners, was heartily welcomed, and shown every courtesy possible in those pioneer times. When he resumed his journey, Archibald, with others, accompanied him for several miles to wish him God's speed on his perilous journey to the coast. Whether he ever reached California, or met an untimely end on the way will never be known. The last that was seen or heard of him was by his Utah relatives.

EXPLOERING

"About 1850 Thomas Broderic, Robert and I scaled the Twin Peaks; the highest mountains in Salt Lake County, height 11,000 feet. They are between Mill Creek and Big Cottonwood Canyons. We were the first white men to perform this feat. Thomas Broderic succeeded in reaching the top. I got within a rod or so and Robert within two hundred yards of it. We started in the morning, expecting to make the trip in a few hours. Had we taken it slower we could have adapted ourselves to the altitude and all reached the summit. The ascent was made on the Big Cottonwood side and was found to be extremely difficult; so we decided to come down by way of Mill Creek Canyon. This proved to be more precipitous than the other. It was with the greatest difficulty that we made our descent. We had only taken a light lunch with us in the morning and were now about exhausted with fatigue and hunger. When at last we reached the bottom, our clothes in tatters, we thought it best to keep to the shadows. But our stomachs tormented us. So we selected the best of the clothing from the three of us, put it on one of our number and pinned the tares together with hawthorns. The one thus attired went to the first house that we came to and obtained something to eat. With a little refreshment we made our way home avoiding the few houses on the way."

About the year 1851 or 1852, being called by President Young, a small company of men, composed of the three Gardner brothers, James Manuam, Joseph Adair, and James Craig, took a trip up the Weber River to its source, thence over to the head of Provo River. They followed it down to Utah Valley and then returned home. The object of the trip was to explore the country, ascertain its resources in timber and grazing lands and take note of anything that would prove serviceable to incoming pioneers.

Wide-eyed children listened to their accounts of that jaunt. Tons of rattlesnakes and other reptiles had been encountered. The beaver at work was described. They had noted evidence of his skill all along the river course. And old Bruin, the brown bear, had peered through the pines at them.